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Mauriac's Remembrance of Things Past

— Mrs. George Norman

THE

# Commonweal

## ANTI-SEMITISM TODAY

by Will Herberg

## Pakistan: Crisis in the Making

by Dan Kurzman

Volume LX, No. 15 July 16, 1954 Twenty Cents

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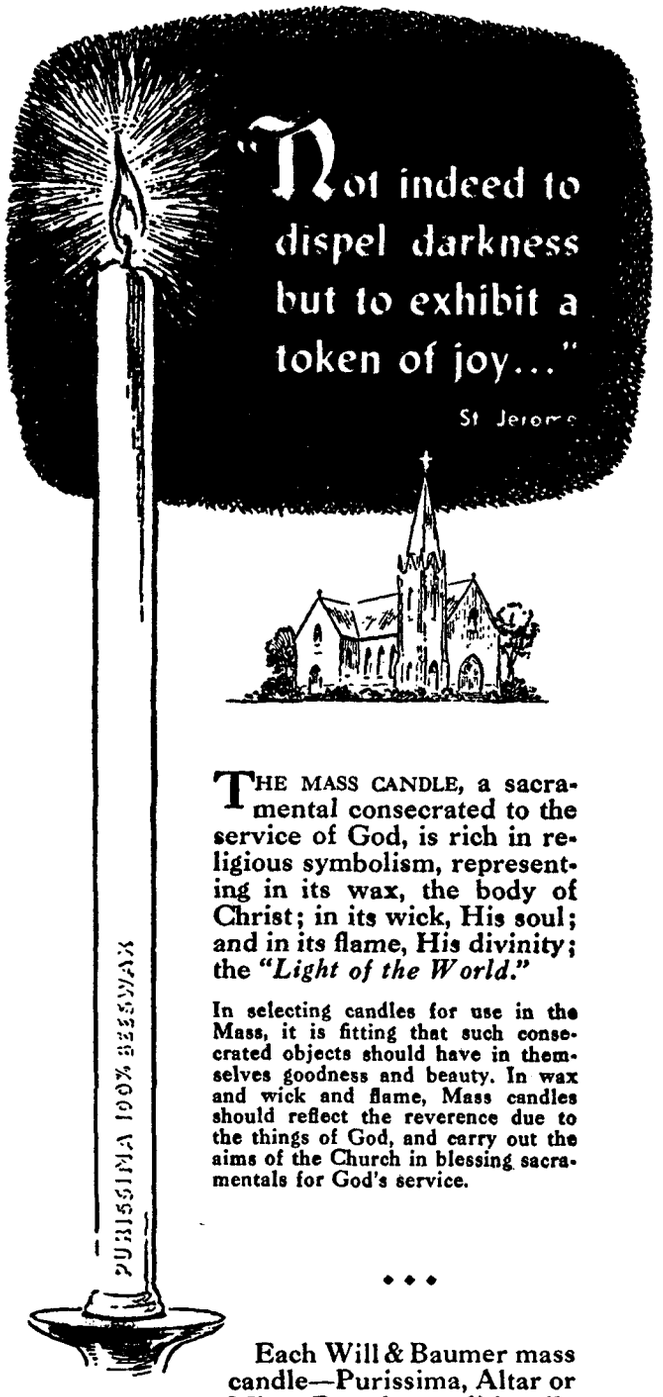


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# THIS WEEK

Week by Week 355

Anti-Semitism Today
*by Will Herberg* 359

Crisis in the Making
*by Dan Kurzman* 363

The Screen
*by Philip T. Hartung* 365

Mauriac's Remembrance of Things Past
*by Mrs. George Norman* 366

Books 370

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THE

# Commonweal

week by week

## THOUGHTS ON "COEXISTENCE"

IN the dim pre-ideological days before World War I, "coexistence" would have been just another name for peace. Nations which disagreed vigorously would come to the conclusion that nothing was to be gained by refusing to accept each other as facts in the world if not as friends and solemnly agree to "coexist."

With the ascendancy of Communism, the problem of coexistence has taken on a new dimension. The Communists are willing to coexist with non-Communism, but only on Communism's own terms. And one of the key principles of the Communist philosophy is that coexistence with non-Communism is not really possible. The inexorable law of history, according to the doctrine, is that there can be no ultimate reconciliation in a world half-Communist and half-non-Communist. The triumph of Marxism is seen as historical necessity—as sure a thing for the future as the future itself.

If this were only an abstract idea, it would not be of such momentous importance. But it is essential to acceptance of the dogma that good Marxists, individuals and nations, act in accordance with their own idea of "freedom"—that is, that they willingly cooperate with the "necessary" march of history toward the total triumph of Communism. That corollary makes a big difference.

The ideological man has an idea of "freedom" which is radically different from the concept cherished in the West. Truly to accept "coexistence"—in other words, not to cooperate with historical necessity—is, to the Communists, as outrageous as accepting the inevitability of Communism's triumph would be for us. To the Communist, as a matter of doctrine, "coexistence" is merely a tactic; it can never be accepted as a long-range *modus vivendi* or as a solution to the problem of Communism and non-Communism meeting in the same world.

One thing the fathers of Marxist ideology did not count on, though, was the development of nuclear weapons. The A-weapons and H-bombs have added a new element to their concept of "historical necessity." We have now reached the point where practical annihilation is quite possible. An all-out war to save the world, either for Communism or for non-Communism, could conceivably end up with no world left to speak of. How much this fact has actually altered the Communist doctrine about cooperating with the inevitable, as they see it, is still anyone's guess.

Certainly it has altered our own attitude considerably. Since 1946 we have taken things from the Russians and Chinese which in a simpler age would have brought on almost daily cries that America's only recourse was war. But he who demands war in the era of the H-bomb knows what he is asking for. Very few have the nerve to look squarely at the new weapons and still talk freely of all-out war, or even to hint at an armed crusade against Communism.

SINCE 1946, for all our talk, we have more or less accepted "coexistence" as a practical policy—except that we called it cold war or a containment policy. The cold war, of course, has warmed up from time to time according to how much we fail to coexist, yet practically no one has ventured to stand up and say boldly, "Let's not coexist any longer. Let's go to war with Russia and wipe out Communism once and for all."

"Coexistence," it seems, is more a matter of vocabulary than of fundamental change in the world situation. Should we start calling the cold war "coexistence"? What would be gained? There is a flexibility suggested in the phrase "cold war" that we need in a world where tyranny and freedom exist side by side. The phrase suggests that we can still do some things about the situation, that there are certain forms of resistance we are ready to take next time the disciples of "historical necessity" start cooperating with the inexorable march of history. The phrase also suggests that we are not yet ready to call black white, slavery freedom, or to accept the subjugation of whole peoples as a



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"necessary" step along the road to the final fulfillment of History's claim on Man.

On the other hand, there is a rigidity, a note of finality in the word "coexistence" when it suggests not a fact but an attitude; the word then implies an "arrangement" with the gangsters of the world. Privately and socially, of course, men do learn to live with evil. But decent men don't traffic with evil on the basis of some "arrangement." We don't speak of "coexisting" with thieves and murderers, although of course we do.

It would seem, then, that we have a choice between three conditions: the cold war (which actually means "coexistence" without connivance in crime), or a hot war (which could conceivably mean co-nonexistence) or "co-existence" (not only as a fact but as a program). The last-named suggests that we too have succumbed to the dogma of Historical Necessity — but we have not and, please God, never will. That is one reason why the term is unacceptable and misleading. Perhaps an even more pertinent reason is that the Communists, our "coexistants" in the bargain, say quite frankly, in their ideological moments, that the whole idea is nonsense. By using the term, we would not be fooling them; but it is quite possible that we could start fooling ourselves.

### EFFECTIVE AID

REPORTS from the current sessions at Geneva of the UN Economic and Social Council tell of big expectations on the part of the underdeveloped countries that are quite misleading. Press dispatches speak of hopes of "large-scale financial aid," with the U. S. slated to be the chief provider.

This is to place the real problem in a distorted context. For what is most needed for the long pull in the undeveloped and underdeveloped lands of the globe is not a series of lavish handouts so much as an increase in their own productivity. That is one of the chief objects of the Point Four program, the outlay for which is a comparatively modest one. In country after country it is demonstrating, both in agriculture and in industry, that depressed living standards can be raised materially by the acquisition of a great deal of new know-how plus new capital on a limited scale.

Yet technical assistance of the right sort is an exacting business. It requires much of the underdeveloped country and its citizens. Old ways have to be abandoned and men have to set out bravely on steep and unfamiliar paths. Moreover, new industries and new methods of agricultural, mining and other production call for intensive personal study and preparation on the part of many. Such enterprises demand new energy, persistence and self-discipline of men who have long since yielded to apathy as a result of harsh climate, chronic illness, extreme poverty and a consequent hopelessness about their capacity to better their condition. There is also a pervasive human tendency to look for magic rules-of-thumb or unexacting short-cuts. Yet U. S. and UN technicians are hardly able to hand out better means of livelihood on a platter.

For a country like the United States the Point Four program also involves considerable demands. Chief of these is in the way of personnel, of men and women who are willing to trek to far places to take up and sustain the discouraging task of instructing badly demoralized peoples. The cost of the technical assistance programs is therefore a high one both for Americans and native peoples, but it is erroneous to conceive the essential task of raising living standards in terms of vast American contributions of direct aid.

### THE FALL ELECTIONS

TO the Democrats, it must sometimes seem that President Eisenhower has come up with the answer to the politician's perennial question — how to stay popular despite the responsibilities of public office. Even after more than a year in the Presidency, Mr. Eisenhower's standing with the voter is apparently unimpaired.

There have, of course, been disappointments. Indeed, a certain amount of post-election let-down

## NEXT WEEK

MRS. GEORGE NORMAN continues her story, begun in this issue, of the formation of François Mauriac:

"M. Mauriac regards himself and rightly, we think, as in a measure one of the Great Misunderstood. In him the 'angst,' the 'despair of life' he may seem to entertain join up with an intense appreciation of what life contains, the all but overwhelming allurement of the present, of 'all that which passes.' Is it his Jansenism or, more truly, a certain Puritanism, as we think it is, which blames in himself, in *Encrits Intimes,* subsequent falls and failures, the spirit so willing, the flesh so weak? We gain, at least, from the endearing humility of these entries, a fuller appreciation of the strength or toughness by which the distinguished writer keeps his Faith 'in the hollow of his hands' . . . ."



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was inevitable, in view of the utopian expectations evidently entertained by some voters. But so far such frustrations have been attributed, not to Mr. Eisenhower, but to individual Cabinet members or Congressional leaders. Mr. Wilson can be blamed for the cuts in the military, Mr. Humphrey for the Administration's tax policy, Secretary Dulles for the handling of the Indochina problem. Over all these failures, smiling and unperturbed, stands President Eisenhower, somehow above the hurly-burly of politics.

On the face of it, Mr. Eisenhower seems well on his way to creating a new concept of the Presidency—something like the ribbon-cutting office of the French President, but without the inconvenience of having to call various political leaders from time to time to form new governments. Conceivably, this could be a useful function, with the President serving primarily as a symbol of national unity, above passion and party. Perhaps in other times this would be the case, although the American system was not framed with such a concept of the Presidency. But even aside from this fact, we certainly do not believe that these are such times.

Take, for example, the coming Congressional elections. In view of the importance Mr. Eisenhower attaches to his legislative program, his present course of action is difficult to understand. Why should Mr. Eisenhower consider the election of a Republican Congress essential if he is to run for re-election in 1956? We can see very large problems if the Democrats win the House and even the Senate—as at the present moment they stand a very good chance of doing. But a vote for many of the Republican candidates can in no way be considered a renewal of the Eisenhower mandate —rather the reverse, in fact, for many of Mr. Eisenhower's present problems stem directly from the character of certain key GOP Congressional figures. How the election of more Republicans like them is going to help Mr. Eisenhower is not at all clear.

A good example of the problem Mr. Eisenhower faces in this regard was provided recently by a vote in the House on the Administration's foreign aid bill. As frequently happens, the measure passed only because the Democrats supported it; in the voting more Democrats than Republicans sided with the President. (For the bill, 141 Democrats, 118 Republicans; against, 78 Republicans, 47 Democrats.)

In the light of such occurrences, it would seem to Mr. Eisenhower's advantage to influence the grass-roots Republican party in the direction of "liberal Republicanism." One would expect Mr. Eisenhower to make a major effort toward encouraging those elements in the Party responsible for his own nomination. So far, his efforts in that direction have been disappointing.

No one asks Mr. Eisenhower to create party dissension by openly opposing Republican candidates. But it is possible for the President to throw his weight behind a particular kind of Republican candidate, and Mr. Eisenhower badly needs Republican legislators who are sympathetic to his point of view. If Mr. Eisenhower is not yet aware that there is in the Republican Party a band of determined men who think even less of him than they do of their old archenemy, Harry Truman, it is time he found it out.

If Mr. Eisenhower's problem on this score were purely a Republican concern, outsiders could sit back and wait for the dust to settle. But the issues at stake are serious ones, and the welfare of the whole nation is involved. For our part, we are not interested in party labels, but in men and what they stand for. The President needs many more responsible legislators who will support him on matters of national interest, particularly in the area of foreign policy. But to get such support, President Eisenhower will have to work for it. One great trouble with being a President in the French figurehead tradition is that French Presidents have no power. American Presidents do, and right now Mr. Eisenhower needs to use it.

### THE RED RIVER DELTA

THE partition of Viet Nam, a subject of negotiation until two weeks ago, is now a fact. The French have withdrawn their troops from the entire southern zone of the Red River Delta in Tonkin, Viet Nam. Some sixteen hundred square miles of territory were thus abandoned to the Communists, giving them control of a rich agricultural area containing two and a half million people. In the abandoned area are the two Catholic bishoprics, Phat Diem and Bui Chu, which have been widely publicized in the United States (Graham Greene wrote about them in this magazine in May), and which have been influential anti-Communist strongholds in the north of this tragic land.

The French Army claims that this withdrawal was necessary if the cities of Hanoi and Haipong were to be defended effectively. The area now turned over to the Viet Minh was virtually indefensible with the troops available, and no adequate reinforcements were forthcoming from metropolitan France. Given, then, the French unwillingness to send draftees to Indochina and their desperate desire to be quit of this war, the withdrawal was



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unavoidable. Whether its timing was very intelligent, when Premier Mendes-France was presumably negotiating over the terms of a Franco-Viet Minh accord in which territorial control would be a factor, can only be answered by someone who knows the state of the negotiations and the real military situation.

What we see is the working out of capitulation. The United States cannot complain, for we forced the French to capitulate. Senator Knowland and those who share his viewpoint cannot complain, for they have done more than almost anyone else to destroy French confidence in the United States. Mr. Knowland's latest ultimatum on the admission of Communist China to the UN, coupled with his effort to bring about a retroactive withholding of aid to France and Italy until EDC is ratified, will seal the Atlantic crisis, and with it the Asian crisis, with magnificent finality. What causes this conviction that the future can be saved by ruthlessly destroying the good accomplished in the past?

So events march forward, and we Americans trot along behind, inventing rationalizations as we go. And in the future can be seen only the faint outlines of a new line to be drawn in Asia, backed up by the same unenforceable threat of massive retaliation, a line which will be as unembarrassing to Communist tactics as was the last one.

## OPPENHEIMER

IN these last years of debate and passion over the question of security in a free government, nothing has so dramatized the problem as the case of J. Robert Oppenheimer. His fate, and the long and devoted deliberations of the Gray board and the Atomic Energy Commission which preceded and ordained the decision, have had the quality of profound art in a climate of neon.

Out of these two decisions, the initial judgment of the Gray Board and the appeal decision of the AEC Commissioners, came two well-argued, well-supported points of view. The final majority decision, to bar Oppenheimer from all further access to security information, may be argued on the grounds of specific evaluations, but may not, we feel, be challenged as anything other than a decision of honesty, made by men of integrity.

That is to say, the AEC decision is one which has been made in a manner which befits a democratic government. Dr. Oppenheimer was confronted with the charges made against him, and was given an opportunity to present his own case with the assistance of distinguished counsel. He could cross-examine witnesses and the evidence against him was taken under oath. The proceedings were being carried on discreetly until Dr. Oppenheimer himself chose to give his side to the press. If he has suffered from having the history of his private and public life intimately exposed in the press, it was a decision of his own making, based on his conviction that his cause was served by having the affair made public.

The Gray report contained one highly questionable evaluation, concerning Dr. Oppenheimer's lack of enthusiasm for the hydrogen bomb project, which was justly criticized by the press and properly disregarded by the AEC Commissioners in their decision.

The AEC majority report also contains what we would regard as an unsound position when it phrases its evaluation in these words: Oppenheimer "is not entitled to the continued confidence of the government and of this commission because of the proof of fundamental defects in his character." Fundamental defects in character are not, we think, what the AEC was evaluating; their business was with the probability or possibility of Dr. Oppenheimer's disclosing, accidentally or deliberately, security information to unauthorized people. The problem of a man's character, in the classic sense, seems to us too private, to sacred, to be given this kind of evaluation. Hearings such as these should deal with overt acts as they may indicate the probability of future acts. The problem in this case is one of phraseology, for the "character defects" the AEC details are events in which Dr. Oppenheimer continued his associations with known Communists or Communist agents after the danger of such action was known to him, and with equivocal statements and misrepresentations he had made to security officers. (The dissenting opinion of AEC Commissioner Smythe argues that the former actions were honorable, and that the latter episodes were, in all but one case, matters of honest mistake now given exaggerated significance.) These acts are evidence of unreliability—they even may be evidence of deliberate dishonesty—but they are not adequate evidence for "fundamental" character judgment of a man who has given so much of himself to the service of this nation.

The effects of this decision, worked out in headlines, given international circulation, are incalculable. The effect on American scientists is likely to be bad. And yet the results, good or bad, will not be the result of demagogy in government or mishandling or emotionalization on the part of responsible officials; the effects will come from the collision of law with a man's life, from a terrible decision made honorably by men who have responsibilities as great as any in history.



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# Anti-Semitism Today

**IT IS NO LONGER DECENT, RESPECTABLE OR "AMERICAN" BUT THE FUTURE OF THE JEW IS BOUND UP WITH THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN SOCIETY.**

WILL HERBERG

ORGANIZED anti-Semitism is definitely on the wane in this country; even the "hidden" forms that make themselves felt in prejudice and discriminatory practices are in decline. According to the best information, overt anti-Semitism seems to have emerged on a national scale in the wake of the Nazi victory in Germany. In the middle thirties, hundreds of anti-Jewish groups, openly racist and pro-Hitler, sprang up throughout the country, and launched well-financed programs of incitement and rabble-rousing. These activities evoked a certain response, not only among German sympathizers in the big cities but also among small-town Americans in the middle- and southwest, who still remembered the great stir the Klan had made a decade before. Anti-Semitic hate-mongering became something of a national problem for the first time in American history.

With Pearl Harbor, organized anti-Semitism went into eclipse, and the various anti-Jewish groups scurried for cover, remaining more or less hidden throughout the war. The war over, they emerged briefly, trying to stage a comeback by exploiting the disillusionment and revulsion of feeling they confidently expected to set in. The venture proved a failure, and by 1947, organized anti-Semitism had reached its lowest ebb. Since then, the manifestations have been too insignificant to permit any attempt to define a trend.

It may be noted, however, that there does not exist at the present time a single anti-Semitic organization of national scope; the local "hate" groups have declined in number (less than fifty today as against some one hundred and forty a dozen years ago), in membership, and in influence, and are showing signs of inner disintegration. Most of them have shifted the burden of their agitation away from overt anti-Semitism to "nationalist" issues of a political character, or even to local and municipal issues which they see some possibility of turning to account. There would seem to be no question that anti-Semitism, in its organized form at least, has virtually ceased to exist in American life.

It is not so easy to draw any firm conclusions as to the incidence and extent of anti-Semitism in its "hidden" forms, although here too all the evidence would seem to show that discrimination in such matters as employment, housing, public accommodations, and educational opportunities has markedly declined, though by no means altogether disappeared. By and large, it may be said that the country today is as free from anti-Semitism as it has been in living memory.

Just what it is that has made for this notable development is by no means clear. There are those who trace it in part to the continuing economic prosperity which this country has been enjoying in the decade since the end of the war; this prosperity, they say, has eased the tensions of life, at least on the economic level, and has made a larger tolerance possible. Whatever projection of fear and insecurity is generated by the anxieties of our time, moreover, is today directed not so much against any group within the national community as against the Kremlin and its "fifth column." In a way, the reality of the peril in which the nation finds itself under threat of Communist totalitarianism has tended to make less necessary the nightmare elaboration of imaginary objects of hatred and fear on which anti-Semitism thrives, though it cannot be denied that anti-Communism here and there has itself tended to take on a tinge of this nightmarish quality.

BE this as it may, it is a fact that a profoundly significant change in public feeling has taken place during the past fifteen years: *Anti-Semitism, and racism generally, have become disreputable.* No one who has followed the cross currents of public sentiment in the twentieth century will be inclined to minimize the vast significance of this shift. Before 1933, overt anti-Semitism was, of course, frowned upon in respectable circles as something rather vulgar and uncultured, but (with rare exceptions) there was no intensity of feeling about it. Racism, particularly in the form of the "Nordic myth," was widespread and unashamed, and it had its explicit anti-Semitic overtones. Henry Adams' shocking outburst against the Jews did not prove so shocking to the cultured ladies and gentlemen in his circle half a

Mr. Herberg is currently working on a new book on religious groups in the United States, to be published by Doubleday.



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century ago. As for the mass of the people, a kind of traditional anti-Semitism at low tension prevailed; it did not lead to any serious outbreaks, but there could be no doubt that it was there. In the 1920's, this kind of anti-Semitism contributed something to the rise to power of the Ku Klux Klan in certain parts of the country, although it should be remembered that the Klan was primarily anti-Catholic and anti-Negro, rather than anti-Jewish. It was in the decade of the 1930's, as I have suggested, that anti-Semitism in virulent and organized form emerged, to be brought to an abrupt halt by America's entry into the war against Nazi Germany. Somehow as a consequence of the war and the immediate postwar years, public feeling underwent an extraordinary change. Racism had been part of the demonic ideology we were fighting, and racism, particularly anti-Semitism, now suddenly became *un-American.*

It is not necessary to insist that large numbers of Americans do not harbor racist or anti-Semitic feelings; of course they do. What is meant is that even they are reluctant to admit these sentiments to themselves and to others, and tend to disguise them in various ways. No military man of our time would dare issue an order such as Grant's notorious diatribe against the "Hebrew merchants" of Vicksburg, and overt anti-Semitism is today the mark of death in politics, as it was not, by and large, before the second World War. The great fact is: *it is no longer decent, respectable, or "American" to be anti-Semitic.* Even the frequent occurrence of "Jewish names" on the growing list of Communist spies, subversives, and "infiltrators" has not, so far as can be judged, had any real effect in stimulating a new anti-Semitism. The change in public feeling brought about by the war and the immediate postwar period seems to be deep and far-reaching.

Yet we cannot leave it at that. The problem of anti-Semitism in America is a problem that goes beyond shifts and fluctuations in public sentiment, no matter how profound. It is, in a real sense, the problem of the historical life of Western man, touching as it does, our society and culture at its every point. A serious attempt to assess the sources and prospects of anti-Semitism in this country would, in effect, amount to a diagnosis of American life. I shall not undertake any such project, but I think that certain considerations on this head might prove of interest and relevance.

ANTI-SEMITISM is obviously in some sense related to the status and role of the Jew in the non-Jewish world. Sociologically, the Jew in the non-Jewish world is the very incarnation of *marginality;* other groups there are which are marginal in this or that society, under such and such circumstances—but the Jew is marginal everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances. No matter how well-adjusted to his culture the Jew may strive to be, he remains marginal: *in* his world, but never quite *of* it. The American Jew is almost quintessentially American, or rather middle-class American; whatever it is that makes the middle-class American middle-class and American, the Jew is even more so. Yet this consummately middle-class American is never fully or entirely a part of middle-class America; there is something about him that forces him, to his own discomfort and often against his will, to stand "outside of" and "over against." Frequently he can make no sense of this anomaly, and would like nothing better than to be rid of it, but it is there and he knows it.

For in the last analysis, the Jew cannot really be totally adjusted to his environment, try as he might. He is the very embodiment of *non-adjustment.* He cannot so identify himself with any culture, society, or institution that he no longer lives in tension with it. There is a dimension of his Jewishness that forces him beyond the limitations of every particular society and culture:

his very being as Jew is trans-national, trans-social, trans-cultural. He is therefore, no matter how sincerely he may regard his society and culture as his own, in a deeper sense an "outsider," and "alien," a man unadjusted and unadjustable. The description of the position of the early Christians given by the author of the Epistle to Diognetus fits the basic actuality of Jewish existence in the non-Jewish world with uncanny precision:

> They dwell in all countries, but only as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others and yet endure all things as if they were strangers. Every foreign land is to them as a native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers.

SOCIOLOGISTS and historians not blinded by doctrinaire formulas or get-rich-quick methodologies have long noted and documented this strange anomaly of Jewish existence, and the events of our generation have hammered it home into the consciousness of Jew and non-Jew alike. Sociologists and historians have also proffered "explanations," and these "explanations" have not been without their limited relevance; but it is becoming increasingly clear that the fact itself somehow escapes all empirical explanation and remains a "mystery," an aspect of the larger "mystery of Israel." "The



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Jewish people," sociologist Carl Mayer has pointed out, "represent a sociologically unique phenomenon and defy all attempts at general definition" ("Religious and Political Aspects of Anti-Judaism," *Jews in a Gentile World*). Theologians, Christian and Jewish alike, have related this "unique phenomenon" to the vocation of Israel in the divine purpose: "Like an alien body, . . . it gives the world no peace . . . so long as the world has not God" (Jacques Maritain, *A Christian Looks at the Jewish Question*). If we take this standpoint and attempt to see the problem from this angle, we may perhaps catch a glimpse of the ultimate significance of the marginality and unadjustability of the Jew under an aspect not open to sociological analysis, though immediately relevant to social life.

In any case, the fact itself cannot be ignored or denied. And it provides us with a fruitful approach to the problem of the sources and long-range prospects of anti-Semitism in this country.

IN the first place, it must be stated quite plainly that anti-Semitism is not something that can be eliminated through changes of culture, ideology, or social system. It is inherent in the "Jewish" situation, that is, in the projective reaction of the non-Jew (pagan, "Christian," or post-Christian) to the "offense" of Jewish existence. Anti-Semitism manifests itself in many and various forms, on many and various levels: it is sometimes virulent, sometimes latent; it makes use of this or that ideology; it expresses itself in terms of economic, social, cultural, political, or religious conflict, or some combination of these. But however it manifests itself, its manifestations do not constitute its "essence," its underlying continuity and enduring meaning. The "essence" of anti-Semitism is the obverse of the "mystery of Israel," and like the latter, it is both historical and trans-historical.

Certain consequences, moreover, would seem to follow as to the incidence of anti-Semitism in the changing context of history. Because the Jew is inescapably an unadjustable "outsider," he is directly imperilled by any tendency towards a closed, totalistic society or institutional set-up, which in its very nature cannot tolerate any form of "outsideness" or non-adjustment. On the other hand, the Jew is most secure in a society that is loose, open, pluralistic, full of undefined, unregimented areas, with plenty of room for non-adjustment, and with a certain tolerance for dimensions of existence beyond nation, state or culture. Perhaps this point would be illumined, and made relevant to the Jew's continuing history, by thinking of the Jew as the embodiment of the "principle" of anti-idolatry. To the extent that any society or culture tends to absolutize itself into the all-in-all of human existence, it becomes idolatrous and is impelled to see in the Jew a threat and a challenge, an indigestible element, who, do what he may, can never quite conform and lose himself in the idolatrous whole.

All history bears witness to this fact. Whether it is the Hellenistic effort to establish a divinized world culture, or the medieval attempt to exalt Christendom as indeed the very City of God, or the Nazi and Communist ventures to erect a divinized total state in which all life would be absorbed: it is always the Jew who is the enemy to be singled out and destroyed. The Jew, by his very being, is at once an offense to, and the bad conscience of, an idolatrous, self-enclosed culture. He is the "eternal outsider" and therefore the "eternal scapegoat," the victim of every society whose unity is monolithic.

IN so far as these comments have any validity at all, they would seem to cast some light on the problem of anti-Semitism in the United States. In a very real sense, the position of the Jew in contemporary America is the most favorable that he has enjoyed in the long history of the Diaspora. He lives in a society as loose and pluralistic as is to be found in the world, a society in which he is completely enfranchised as citizen and in which cultural chauvinism (of the kind so pervasive in France) is almost unknown. Despite the calamity-howlers on the "right," the United States is the most unregimented country on the face of the earth; official institutions are only a part of the web of society, and all varieties of groups, "minorities," and associations jealous of governmental interference, flourish in disorderly freedom. No one expects a man's life to be totally encompassed in, or defined by, the official institutions of state, society, and culture; indeed, the very notion of such totalism is abhorrent to American tradition and the American "way of life." In such a situation, the Jew can feel really secure and at home, because the trans-national, trans-cultural, trans-political aspects of his Jewishness fall most naturally into the wide areas of "openness" which our society permits.

There is still another factor which renders present-day America a particularly favorable environment for the Jew. For American society is, almost literally before our eyes, being restructured from a land of ethnic-immigrant groups into a national community harboring within itself three sub-communities in terms of which almost every American identifies himself. These three sub-communities, which are increasingly coming to constitute the primary contexts of social location for the American of today, are the so-called "religious communities," Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish. These are American structures in the most literal sense of the term. For the American Jew, this sociological development means that his "separateness" as a Jew is no longer regarded as a mark of his foreignness, but rather as a sign of his Americanness. He is a Jew, and is every-



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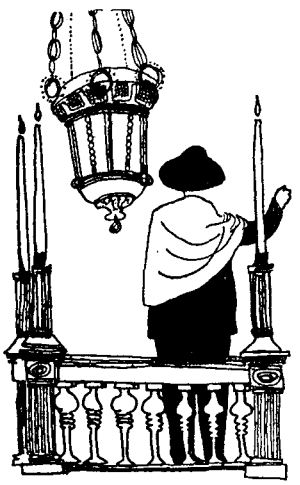
where recognized as legitimately a Jew, in the same sense in which his neighbor is a Protestant or a Catholic. Unlike Europe, America knows no national or cultural separateness ("minorities"), except as a transitional immigrant phenomenon pending full Americanization; it knows racial separateness unfortunately only in terms of inequality and discrimination. But it does know, and approve of, diversity and separateness of religion as something permanent and equal.

The Jew who identifies himself as a Jew in terms of his religious community is therefore doing something that every "right-thinking" American understands and applauds. Jews in the past were often granted the possibility of Jewish existence, but only at the price of exclusion from the larger society and culture. With the emancipation, the Jew as a human being was enfranchised and given equal status, this time, however, at the price of his Jewishness and Jewish identity. In present-day America almost for the first time, the Jew can find his assured and equal status in American society not despite, but *because* of, his idenification with the "Jewish community." This is all so new that we still do not fully appreciate its tremendous significance for American life.

I DO not think any one at all conversant with American reality will care to deny that the conditions of Jewish life in this country are indeed extraordinarily favorable. Yet there are darker sides to the picture as well, and it is necessary to examine them along with the others.

American society is still loose, open, and pluralistic, remarkably immune to nationalism and chauvinism as the Old World knows them. But this kind of society has hitherto been closely associated with America's favored position of security and self-confidence. This position is now being seriously undermined by world developments. Objectively, America has lost its security—it finds itself in extreme and unprecedented peril as it confronts the Communist world in Europe and the Far East—and this development has already begun seriously to affect the basic consciousness of the American people. There is an anxiety and tension today unknown since the days of the Civil War; it is manifesting itself in all sorts of disturbing ways. In other words, the openness and looseness of American society, upon which everything depends, is being threatened by the course of history; a certain constriction is beginning to set in, perhaps inevitably, but not without its ominous overtones for the Jewish future.

There is another factor, operating much more subtly, but likely to turn out in the long run to be of even greater significance, and that is the growth of "other-direction" in American life. I here employ the terminology and categories developed by David Riesman in his important work, *The Lonely Crowd*. Riesman, it will be recalled, distinguished three types of character structure—tradition-directed, inner-directed, and other-directed—which he finds predominating at different times in different societies, and yet also entering in different degrees into the characterological picture of a society such as ours. Tradition-direction, so characteristic of primitive and stable peasant societies, implies the transmission from generation to generation, and the internalization by each succeeding generation, of a fairly fixed pattern of folkways as a code of behavior.



Inner-direction is something very different; in inner-direction, what is internalized by each succeeding generation is not a traditional pattern of folkways but a set of "principles" or "goals," together with an inner drive ("conscience") that keeps the individual true to them: the inner-directed man operates with a kind of built-in gyroscope, which keeps him steadily on his course, driving ahead for the fulfillment of his purposes.

IN our society, tradition-direction has disappeared, if indeed it ever existed; inner-direction is dominant, but a new character type is emerging, the type designated as *other-directed*. Instead of possessing a built-in gryroscope which keeps him true to his course, the other-directed man operates with a kind of built-in radar apparatus, which is ceaselessly at work receiving signals from the person's "peer group" and adjusting him to the situation indicated by those signals. The greatest horror of the other-directed man, that which renders him so acutely uncomfortable, is to feel unadjusted" or "unsociable," at odds with his environment. The "morality" of the inner-directed type becomes "morale" for the other-directed; "character" becomes "personality"; moral indignation and intolerance give way to a kind of all-embracing tolerance—of a very curious kind. The large tolerance of the other-directed man has its limitations: it is tolerant of everything except inner-direction and non-adjustment, which it brands as "anti-social" and which it finds to be both unhealthy and sinister.

Now the Jew is almost by definition the inner-directed man; almost by definition, too, he is the unadjusted and unadjustable. What can the bland, friendly, tolerant, and sophisticated suburbanite junior executive and his wife, who so largely compose the other-directed group



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in our society, make of this? Anti-Semitic in the crude old sense of the term they cannot be; they are far too tolerant and sophisticated for that. But on the other hand, they are emotionally repelled and disturbed by the inadjustability of the Jew, by what they must regard as his self-assertiveness and restlessness. To the man whose supreme law of life is adjustment and conformity, and that is essentially the kind of man the other-directed type is, the Jew, who by virtue of his Jewishness "gives the world no peace," must appear, as I have said, to be something unhealthy and sinister. He has nothing against the Jew, this other-directed man, he really hasn't; but the Jew must give up his Jewishness, not his "religion," of course—every decent person has his "religion"—but his being "different." Yet how can a Jew help being "different"? That is what his Jewishness means.

IT is this invisible, almost undefinable spread of other-direction, and not the "McCarthyism" with which liberals love to make our flesh creep, that is the primary factor making for conformity in our society. The threat of a stifling conformity is real, but it is much more subtle and insidious than a largely imaginary political terrorism. Political terrorism, where it exists, we can take care of, but how are we to deal with the spread of the cult of "adjustment"? This constitutes a real problem for our entire American culture, but above all for the American Jew, who would necessarily be the first victim of a culture in which other-directed conformism allowed no room for "eccentricity," individuality, and non-adjustment.

This, I think, is a fair picture of the situation as it confronts us today. The situation is complex and intricate; it does not lend itself to simple black-and-white formulation. Anti-Semitism in the United States is not, or is only minimally, a problem of the lunatic-fringe "hate" groups, which have never been so weak as they are today. Anti-Semitism in the United States is basically a problem of the inner dynamics of our society and culture

If we can preserve our loose, pluralistic, open society against the constricting forces, political and cultural, that history and social development have unleashed, then we need not be unduly disturbed about the danger of anti-Semitism in this country. "Every age," Solomon Schechter once said, "has its own idolatry, and the Jew is always the chosen victim of the Moloch in fashion." If we can somehow manage to preserve our society and culture from falling into the idolatries of totalism and worshiping the Moloch of total "adjustment," we will be able to look with some assurance to the future of the Jew in America and to the future of our American hope. For better or for worse, the future of the Jew in America is bound up with America's future.

*FROM PAKISTAN*

# Crisis In the Making

## DAN KURZMAN

AMERICAN plans to build Pakistan into a Middle East-Asian defense bulwark, as embodied recently in an arms aid accord and a Turkish-Pakistani alliance, have been dealt a severe blow by a Communist-inspired near-revolution in the province of East Bengal. This infant Moslem nation is in danger of splitting in two, with the rebel sector, now under army control, possibly falling into Communist hands. But even if the union is maintained, the Reds may extend their influence throughout the country. Indeed, regardless of what happens, the Pakistan crisis represents a new point of Communist pressure in a part of the world already threatened by Communist victories in Indochina.

East Bengal is carved out of a corner of eastern India about one thousand miles from the main body of Pakistan to India's west. Though one-seventh the size of the parent sector, it contains fifty-six per cent of the nation's seventy-six million people, and has long demanded that the federal government sitting in the western city of Karachi grant it complete internal autonomy. This demand has now developed in some quarters into a call for full independence. The East Bengalis have been convinced by local politicians anxious to break the power of Prime Minister Mohammed Ali's cabinet that their province has been reduced to the status of a colony to be culturally absorbed and economically exploited by West Pakistan.

Culturally, they feel, in fact, far greater affinity to the Hindus in neighboring parts of India than to their distant Moslem compatriots with whom they joined in a national union in 1947 when the Indian sub-continent was partitioned in accordance with the religious predominance of the various areas. And indeed, in their heritage of Bengali art, music and literature, the East Pakistanis can boast of one of the richest of Asian cultures.

But even more bitter are their economic grievances. East Bengal possesses all of Pakistan's raw jute (eighty per cent of the world supply), which provides about forty per cent of the nation's foreign exchange. Therefore the Bengalis, envious, in any case, of West Pakistan's living standards (its per capita income is about four times as high as their own) and suffering greatly

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from a severe fall in jute prices, feel that they should be getting more economic assistance from the central government than has so far been forthcoming. "We're being cheated," a Bengal school teacher told me. "We don't get benefits proportionate to our contributions to the national wealth." She was not at all impressed by the fact that Karachi allots about fifty per cent of its provincial aid funds—to be used for health, education and other purposes—to East Bengal and has financed more than seventy per cent of the region's infant textile and jute industries, representing two and a half times the aid granted since the founding of the State to West Pakistan's more firmly established industries.

The East Bengalis are incensed, moreover, by what they consider Karachi's failure to bring down substantially the high prices of rice and cloth, the province's most vital staple items. They are not satisfied with the central government's recent reduction of the price of cloth by fifteen cents a yard (a worker earns about sixty cents a day) accomplished by sending into the province large quantities of indigenous and imported cotton goods. And there appears to be no improvement at all pending as regards rice, one and a half million tons of which must be imported from the western sector yearly to meet provincial needs of eight million tons. The central government is further blamed for its slow progress in implementing land reforms and for the corruption riddling local federal agencies.

AS a result of these many grievances, as well as of political ambitions, opposition local groups ranging from extreme right to the Communists joined last year in an United Front party. Their primary aim was to press for national elections which, they hoped, would send to Karachi a government agreeable to East Bengal's demands for autonomy and greater economic benefits. Lavishly promising the public everything from immediate land reform to drastic wage increases, the United Front last March won a crushing provincial electoral victory over the Moslem League, Pakistan's founding and biggest national party, confining it to ten of the three hundred and nine local assembly seats. With the majority of Pakistan's population within East Bengal's borders, the United Front was now virtually certain to win control of the central government in a new national election.

The Communists, anxious at this time for demonstrations against, or appearing to be against, the nation's arms aid accord with the United States, exploited to the full Karachi's refusal to hold such an election immediately. They instigated three jute and paper mill riots in May by turning Bengali against non-Begali. The death toll was more than six hundred. Arms smuggled in from the Indian port of Calcutta were reported used in the fighting. Carried along on this wave of rebellion, Chief Minister Abdul Kasem Fazlul Huq, a United Front non-Communist leader who, ironically enough, first proposed the partition of India several years ago, recently stated that he favored complete independence for East Bengal and that the partition had been a mistake. The upshot: ten thousand troops were dispatched to throw out the provincial cabinet and impose the rule of the Governor of the province, which is almost equivalent to martial law.

This new emergency regime is reported to have rounded up and imprisoned hundreds of Communists and other subversives. But considering the fact that almost one-fourth of the assembly seats went to Communists or fellow-travelers in the March election, it would appear doubtful that Communist influence can be erased. Indeed, sympathy for Communism may well grow.

WHAT is likely to happen now? The central government may finally submit to the pressure exerted by the United Front for a new national election, though up to now it still stands on the hollow excuse that West and East Pakistan haven't agreed yet on a mutually satisfactory constitution. On the other hand, Karachi may simply hold tight in the hope that the loosely organized United Front will eventually splinter into its original small, rival party components no longer capable of pressing their demands effectively. But even if this did happen, the national leaders could not be so unrealistic as to expect the Moslem League to rise from the grave in which it now lies in this province. Opposition to them might not be unified, but it would be there. And in any event, how long and how tightly can the government hold?

If it holds too long, an underground war for independence may well break out, and such a struggle would almost certainly be led by the well-disciplined Communists with their smuggled arms. Moreover, there is a strong possibility that East Bengalis in Pakistan's army who, while comprising a small percentage of the total two hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, may rebel.

The dilemma in which Karachi thus finds itself is further complicated by the fact that disgruntled ele-

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ments in West Pakistan are beginning to take advantage of the crisis in the east to push their own economic and other demands. Discontent is especially notable in the cotton producing areas of the Punjab, which have suffered greatly as the result of a nose-dive of cotton prices almost as disastrous as in the case of jute.

How will all this affect Pakistan's defense position? If West and East Pakistan maintain their union, the United States cannot be certain how long a government will be in power that will cooperate with the West, as the East Bengali leaders, who may eventually take over, have not committed themselves to the arms agreement with Washington. Indeed, leftist pressure from their province might well force them to denounce it.

A complete split between the two sectors of the country might mean the loss to the Free World only of East Bengal, but this in itself would be a severe loss. For this area, strategically located between India and Burma and a short distance from Chinese-held Tibet, is within easy air striking range of China. It also contains more than half of Pakistan's potential military manpower. The East Bengalis, though probably possessed of sufficient jute riches to maintain its independence, might nevertheless choose to become part of powerful neutralist India. But there is also a good possibility that the Communists would take over this region—particularly if independence grew out of civil war—and turn it into a Red Chinese satellite. The unrest here has already scared off many potential domestic and foreign investors in East Bengali industries. Moreover, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development has called off negotiations for a huge industrial loan it had been considering for this area.

An independent West Pakistan would be likely to retain its ties with the West—and most valuable ties for us, indeed, as it holds up the eastern flank of the Middle East and is separated from Russia only by a narrow strip of Afganistan territory to the north. But the nation could contribute to the West's defense less than half of its present manpower potential. And the loss of jute income would cause living standards to fall sharply, providing the Communists, who at this time are very weak in West Pakistan, with sure-fire propaganda fuel. Nevertheless, this region, with its surpluses of rice and cotton and its textile mills, could no doubt continue to live without East Bengal, just as the reverse is true.

But it is unfortunate indeed that Pakistan finds herself faced with an internal rupture just as she is joining hands with the West in defending against an external threat. For no matter what the eventual outcome, this revolutionary crisis is bound to reduce the effectiveness of this nation as a defense bastion to an important degree, if it isn't lost to us altogether. And it may well stir up new Communist activity in an area which is already in danger of disappearing behind the Bamboo Curtain.

# THE SCREEN

### *LOTSA PEOPLE; LOTSA EXCITEMENT*

WHILE I liked the movie version of "The High and the Mighty" better than the original novel by Ernest K. Gann, I have to admit that both have the same weaknesses, and in the movie they are even more apparent. Gann, who also wrote the screenplay, belongs to that school of writers who think that every man has a story; and when he gathers twenty-two people for an eventful plane flight from Honolulu to San Francisco, he is, come hell or high water, going to make every passenger a character with a story.

We begin to learn about the passengers and crew as they check in in Honolulu. There are a couple of flashy dames with shady pasts (Claire Trevor, Jan Sterling), a co-pilot with something tricky in his past (John Wayne), a quarreling, embittered, cafe-society married couple (Laraine Day, John Howard), a navigator who has cause to be worried about his wife (Wally Brown), a middle-aged, middle-western couple who saved for years for a Hawaiian vacation that turned sour (Phil Harris, Ann Doran), a big-shot theatrical producer and his wife (Robert Newton, Julie Bishop), an invalid in pain (Paul Fix), an atomic scientist terrified by his own discoveries (Paul Kelly), a crackpot who plans to murder one of the passengers (Sidney Blackmer) and on and on.

When the plane carrying these troubled and superficially drawn people gets beyond the point of no return above the Pacific, one of its motors shakes loose from its moorings. How does each person react when cargo and baggage are thrown overboard? How does each react when he discovers the plane may not reach land? Director William A. Wellman, using CinemaScope, WarnerColor and his cast, makes the most of the excitement.

IF your preference in movies runs to wacky English comedies, "Man with a Million" is for you. This should really be considered as an Anglo-American comedy, because while it was made in England and its cast is largely English, it is based on Mark Twain's *The Million Pound Note,* and the lead character is played by Gregory Peck. The matter, in this wonderful little fable illustrating the power of mind over matter, is a million pound note that two delightfully screwball brothers (Wilfred Hyde White, Ronald Squire) draw from their bank and give to an American who is penniless and friendless in London in 1903 "when England was very rich." The catch is that Greg has to return the note intact in a month.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.



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# Mauriac's Remembrance of Things Past

MRS. GEORGE NORMAN

FRANÇOIS Mauriac, as one of the most elusive writers of today, is one of the most discussed. He is personally one of the least known.

To the average reader Mauriac's is a rather vague personality, that of a French writer thought to be a Catholic and to write a good deal about the Landes, associated for us with great forest-fires in the south of France near Bordeaux.

It is therefore of real interest, to those who care to know an author as a human being, that a collection of M. Mauriac's private papers has recently appeared, (entitled *Ecrite Intimes,* published by Edition Palatine, Geneva and Paris).

If we also read Mauriac's *Journal* composed of articles for the press, and accept his assessment of his journalistic writings as "a sort of half-intimate diary," we get an almost complete outline of a life and character, and one of deep interest more especially to Catholics. The little volumes of this *Journal* give us in particular Mauriac's stature beyond and above his place in today's literature; in surroundings largely cynical and deChristianized, he is one of the most known and widely-read of modern writers, an "Immortal," or Royal Academician, and Nobel Prize winner, and he holds aloft, almost flaunts, the vigor of a Faith tested and firmly held, an intransigent and virile belief in, and love of, God and Jesus Christ.

M. MAURIAC is a Bordelais, and the Bordelais of old were Frondeurs and perhaps remain so. He may have inherited their rebellious, or critical, spirit, or even, possibly, a trace of Gallicanism. He published, a few years ago, strictures on religion as practiced in certain quarters; they not unnaturally met with criticism, as his remarks in the press concerning the Dominican priest-workers of Paris may have done. All that is certain is that none of this impairs a difficult but entire submission to the Church. Add to this the ruthless sincerity of the text, and we can better gauge its value.

M. Mauriac has not, either, escaped criticism on more general grounds. On the occasion of a "fulminating" sermon of the Bishop of Le Mans, addressed to Catholic novelists, other Catholics hastened to forward its report in the press to the writer whom they believed it to concern. The Bishop, however, himself assured M. Mauriac that the sermon had not had him in view; he was not only charmed but greatly edified, said His Lordship, by the author's books.

The opening section, first published some years back, of the four which form the *Ecrits Intimes, Le Commencement d'une Vie,* its teaching, its memories, its romance and tragedies, is an indispensable introduction to the whole. M. Mauriac, however, in his preface today asks himself if he were really the child he had there "brought back to life. . . . I admired with what audacity I stressed the solitude and sadness of my childhood . . . no doubt when I applied myself to this work I had no intention of writing confessions, but at least I was determined to say nothing but the truth but, as soon as art appears in this sort of work, they lie."

It stands out of the whole text that it does not lie. His childhood was not unhappy, but François Mauriac is, in reality, before all else a poet, and this may have informed and transformed his past memory. When he adds that of all his pleasures the dearest came precisely from "that melancholy heart which it has pleased me here to exhibit," we are faced with one of those paradoxical subtleties which characterize him and make of Mauriac the acclaimed arch-analyst of storm-ridden climates and hearts.

FRANÇOIS Mauriac was born in the town that, with its surroundings, was to remain for him the world's center. In the same way that, in the first line of the Tharaud's enchanting *Notre cher Peguy,* we read, "Peguy, that was my youth," so Mauriac records, "Bordeaux, that is my childhood," and, later, quite ignoring his life in Paris: "The history of Bordeaux is the history of my body and soul. . . . The houses, the streets of Bordeaux, these are the events of my life." He both loved and hated it, "like all that holds our heart . . . a beloved being we hate because of what it usurps, of what it confiscates of our real self to its own profit. . . . So it was with our town." One trouble of his youth he does not later disown was

"Mrs. George Norman" is the pen name of an English writer.



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the feeling that Bordeaux would not own him, so unsociable, queer and ugly he felt himself to be. "But since I left her, I feel myself to be Bordelais of the Bordelais!"

At the age of twenty, François Mauriac did leave his town for Paris; he has lived away from it not infrequently, but place and neighborhood were so to inform his work that it is worth our consideration.

It is a great city, the fourth largest in France, southern in the terrific heat of its summers and once the capital of all Aquitaine that gave England a queen. From its greatest bridge, one looks along five miles of docks, the wine-cellars of whose quays on the Garonne are sights for travelers the world over. From Roman days it has lived by commerce, chiefly the fruit of its surrounding vineyards. One of these vineyards M. Mauriac has inherited with its old family *maison-de-maitre,* his beloved Malagar, slightly disguised and "embellished," so he says, in so many books. It was to Britain that in olden days the wines most frequently took the sea-way; for four centuries the town and all Guyenne and Gascony actually belonged to England, its Black Prince here held his brilliant Court.

That, to the foreigner, is Bordeaux—great mansions on its quays and squares, shops that rival Paris, great churches, a vast traffic. The world that the child loved was quite other. Away from the heart of the city, quiet streets wind narrowly between old houses, sober and silent; how often has Mauriac not described them? There he was born, went to school, grew to manhood.

The Mauriac family was Catholic, respected and rich, owning vineyards sloping to the Garonne in one direction, great pine-woods in the other which came almost to the city gates. Twenty months after the boy was born into so prosperous a setting his father died. His mother with her five children "took refuge" in her young widowhood with her own mother close by. A third floor, filled with the sound of the great bell of the cathedral and the wailing of sirens from the docks, was given over to them. If their life was, in the French tradition, austere, M. Mauriac says it was also joyous. Besides three lively brothers and a sister of whom we hear less, these were countless boy and girl cousins coming and going and all filled with the gaiety which in France ranks almost as a virtue; the young scarcely expect to be either liked—or good—without it.

THE boy François, from his own account, was far from living up to this high standard; in reality he was, if not as "variable as the shade," at least as variable as an artist. So it is with only a measure of surprise that we may have read M. Claude Mauriac's statement in print, at the time of the Nobel Award, that never had he laughed so long or so often as with his illustrious father, or that so consummate a playboy, if a melancholy one, as Cocteau should write: "Mauriac . . . Naif, gay, petulant, secretive, adorable Mauriac," a far cry from "the humiliated and touchy adolescent" of M. Mauriac's own description.

Yet, even if this laughter-maker was never *"l'enfant triste and que tout blessait,"* he was, at least, of an extreme sensitiveness or he could scarcely be the writer we know. The original text of the *Ecrits Intimes,* in any case, in analyzing the supposed sadness of bygone years, hastens to emphasize, "It would be folly to incriminate religion. It gave me then more joys than pains. . . . The heavenly tenderness of First Communion Masses impregnated our lives. As my grandmother had fifteen grandchildren, every year we celebrated one of these delicious ceremonies. Every Sunday with the same trembling emotion I recited the Acts before Communion from the Imitation of Christ, words of fire which stamp a heart for life. Far from religion having overshadowed by childhood. . . . It was not because of it, it was in spite of it, that I was sad. . . ."

But already 'Jansenism' shows its narrow visage, or was it not also the Huguenot or Calvinistic tradition of the Frondeurs that lingered in the town, or even, nearer the case, simply Puritanism itself? At any rate, life for the children centered in their mother's bedroom "hung with grey." There they said their evening prayers, but the invocation the boy best recalled was of "the uncertainty in which I am that death will not this night take me by surprise."

AT the age of five, François was sent to day-school, possibly with a view to developing his joy-of-life; if so, Soeur Adrienne's *Jardin des Enfants* "in a sombre street" rather failed in result; the convent smelled of disinfectant, recreation consisted in the melancholy making of little gardens with, of all things, pebbles from the courtyard. François felt himself despised, if not disliked and he hated games; far more than in later life he longed, indeed craved, to be alone. Nobody loved him!

Where, however, the unCatholic aura most strikes the reader must be in the children's precocious wrestling with the problem of Grace. What other children, M. Mauriac asks, were so preoccupied? At the carnival held, it is true, traditionally on Ash Wednesday, "every mask was in my eyes in a state of sin" At the window (on what should have been, by rights, it is true, a day of penance) the little boy was passionately engaged, not by the beflowered cars and dominoes, but by human beings condemned to eternal punishment. . . . On the vast *Place des Quinconces* were constantly recurring spectacles to thrill normally conditioned boys and girls; the little Mauriac's unfortunate reaction, on not too conclusive evidence, was that of a shocked horror before certain small *"baraques lou-*



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*ches."* True, rather older comrades had hair-raising tales of vice in places so seemingly innocent as the horse-shows, but these braggarts were the *"sales types"* and would have been disregarded but for the Problem of Grace. Here, we seem to see one root, deep-planted, of the too obtrusive sense of sin with which critics credit François Mauriac.

M. Mauriac implies that he has not in later life won the approval of the school that followed Soeur Adrienne's. "Grand-Lebrun," he engagingly writes, "that I carry in my heart, does not carry me in theirs . . . Grand-Lebrun, like all that is loved, can understand nothing of the feeling it inspires."

He swung there, he says, from extreme to extreme, still sometimes believing himself the rejected of men, at others convinced of an intellectual superiority, only scandalized that his masters did not seem to see it! We do not gather whether these teaching religious perceived, checked or increased the "Jansenism" of their pupil; some of them in their long black coats and "impossible hats" seem to have, if anything, exceeded him in originality.

There was the Director, "excellent priest," but a wag and highly incapable of hiding from the *grands bourgeois* with whom he had to deal that he was aware how ridiculous they were! Then the Abbe Pequignot, the college mascot so many Honours did his pupils win; in class not a boy "dared to raise his nose." There was a *Literature,* imposed by the House, to quote which earned the Abbe's outspoken contempt, as when questioned on Montaigne, says M. Mauriac, he started off with a paragraph from the despised volume.

" 'Zero, sit down.'

'But, Monsieur l'Abbe, it is in the book.'

'Exactly, and you get a zero.'

Still, it is certain he awoke my intelligence."

No problems of Grace appear to have disturbed the long summer holidays in the family property. The children concurred in pity of their friends condemned to the gay *bains-de-mer* of their coast; no holidays could be happy away from the country of "pines, sand and grasshoppers."

Were not their own great woods the most enchanted in the world? How tame in comparison the other family properties where the cousins must put up with Vines. Here even François could be as solitary as he liked, wandering and mooning, already composing poetry, "Thus there entered into me for eternity those implacable summers . . . while there was at least the wind." (Vainly sighed for in the city) . . . "the immense forest, scented and warm . . . as if I were only one pine among a thousand others and that the wind invades."

This youthful dreaming drew to an end; François was growing into young manhood. That childhood, dwelt upon as being the formation of a writer, was passing; the force that was to detach him from what he both loved and hated sent him to Paris, the Mecca of the younger generation, to knock upon its door.

The door was to yield without undue exertion for François Mauriac, he was not to starve and struggle in a garret above the town, and he took his time. He worked for six months at the *Ecole des Chartes,* the ostensible reason of his migration, lived at the first place that came to hand, a poor enough Hotel de l'Espérance, but he left "to throw myself into literature," and took a flat of his own, thus turning, he says, into the complete bourgeois.

He missed the comradeship and poverty of the Hotel, which would "so have enriched" him, but before long friends who ran a little review asked him for some verses. He brought out at his own expense and with astonishing results, a modest volume; a new friend, a Bordelais, Jean de Laville, whom he had hardly known at home and now met on some Paris quay, suggested a title, *Les Mains Jointes.* Following the French custom, copies were sent to the masters of the craft, all except to Barrès, the idol of the young intelligentsia, the super-idol, if there is such a thing, of the young Mauriac—never would he dare to submit work of his to Barrés, the greatest and most disdainful of them all.

As Barbey d'Aurevilley years before had stormed Paris with his outrageous ruffles and laces, so now François was to disguise himself on these same Boulevards as the last thing in the world he was—the complete man of the world. Fashionable attire, a beflowered button-hole, ties to catch the eye, earned the scorn of young intellectuals; it could not occur to them that the pose hid the shrinking provincial from Guyenne and that behind it the real youth sheltered.

IN his first months in Paris, Mauriac had, however, somehow become the President of a group of Catholic students. He had, on an occasion, to speak at a conference, in the presence of the author, on the work of René Bazin. In one of his intellectual-superiority moods he arrived so full of confidence as to have made no notes; he knew his well-tested powers of speech and duly mounted the platform beside the author. And then the heavens fell, he opened his mouth and no words came, mind and memory were blank. He had to sit down to the "anguished murmer" of the audience, sit out the evening facing it. Such was the imbecile pride of youth, he says, that, had he not been a Christian, he might even have committed suicide. . . . Instead, he left Paris, took train for Brussels and wandered the streets of that charming capital, ending up in a night-club or café which he left in the small hours, far less naive, he says, than when he entered.

And then one morning at breakfast back in Paris, there was a letter; it was signed Barrès and read:



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> Monsieur: You are a great poet whom I admire, a poet truthful, measured and profound. . . . I should like to tell the public so. That is how I have delayed to send you my thanks for this precious little book, read, re-read, every day for a fortnight. I am profoundly glad that we have a poet.

This was too bad of Jean de la Ville! But François was no longer to be taken in by so childish a practical joke. Yet . . . he re-read the letter, Jean did not write like that. . . . Then he remembered that, weeks ago, in holidays at Bordeaux, a bookseller had written for a copy of his poems "on *papier de Japon*" for Barrès; he, François, had simply considered it a collector's whim and forgotten. . . . So the letter was not a silly joke, Barrès had written to him—and in such terms—about his verses!

M. Mauriac forgets how he answered the great man, but very shortly there was a second letter: Barrès knew what one felt about a first book, so he had "said a word" about *Mains Jointes* in the *Echo de Paris*. "You must not thank me, it is I who thank you for giving me verses I can love."

He met Barrès, actually presented himself "in a strangled voice . . . I am François Mauriac." Barrès had gazed at him, at the button-hole and tie (black with red masks on it): "What? you are not *un petit seminarist*. It is true some of your poems are very incendiary (*brulants*)."

It had happened, he knew Barrès; it was, however, with the slight coming to earth that too often follows such a meeting in the flesh. Too much that Mauriac loved and esteemed in literature was not considered by the Master; the disciple was cast down, not yet had he learned, he says, of the quarrels on Olympus, its jealousies, its occasional smallness.

A long article on *Mains Jointes* by the great writer followed, however, and François Mauriac had indeed "arrived," at least to the general public. Paradoxically, for all his self-distrust, he had always known he would arrive; stranger still, the poor viciousness of the Brussels café, following on the Bazin disaster, disclosed in him a *hatred of failure;* he felt himself too weak to bear being beaten! It is rare, he writes, for pride to be lucid, as his was; his strength lay in realizing his weakness. Yet, how was he to "dominate life" and yet remain himself? "I made the inventory of my resources. And first of all, whatever might happen, not to let go the hand of God."

Meanwhile, he tells us that he was living a life that from any angle was idiotic, frequenting worldly salons, mooning in cafes, adapting himself to any milieu with that capacity he possessed of living at once on two different planes. If this was not living on the heights, it was scarcely what he calls "basely squandered." By this time, indeed, he had formed friendships with men of such quality as his beloved André Lafon, whom he called the most inspired of them all and whose Life, considered a short masterpiece, Mauriac was to write. André, like other friends not quite so dear to him, was to be killed in the Great War. With Robert Vallery-Radot, François founded a *Cahier* that, like Péguy's, was to alter the world. Their aim was a more entirely spiritual one than Péguy's, for it was nothing less than the spiritualizing of French literature.

Other friends belonged to the inner circle then dominating literary Paris and whose head and font was the famous N.R.F. or *Nouvelle Revue Française;* it, in fact, took eight years, (including those of the first World War) for Mauriac to enter the precincts. Unlike many immature writers, he had not rushed again into print after a first early success, Barrès, he says, had had a personal reason for over-appreciating the early *Mains Jointes,* and shortly after its appearance, one of the elect, came out with a sally, a warning to "bad writers." Mauriac could not consider himself one of these unfortunates, but he was aware how much reading and experience went necessarily to the making of the writer he meant to become, and he lay fallow, throwing off occasional articles he was later to call "very poor," and letting life and books teach him his trade.

(*This is the first of two articles on M. Mauriac. The second will appear in the next issue.*)


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# A Leader Who Outlived America's Age of Innocence

THE TAFT STORY. By William S. White. Harper. $3.50.

By WILLIAM P. CLANCY

AN indication of Robert A. Taft's true stature came with his passing: the Senate, and the nation, received it with a grief which was probably as genuine and universal as such things can be. For in William S. White's words, by the end of his life many of the Senator's most embittered political enemies had begun to accept him for what he was —"not his ideas on a dozen great and small subjects and not his approach to a dozen others but the fundamental dignity of his life and intentions." And even those who would not accept this fundamental dignity at the time of Taft's death would, I think, be likely to accept it after reading Mr. White's book, for in his work it is clearly, and movingly, established.

Certain reservations and qualifications of course remain. Senator Taft's famous Integrity was occasionally sullied and his celebrated Brilliance was often dimmed. Like this reviewer, one may still think, after reading *The Taft Story,* that the Senator was wrong on almost all the great issues from 1938 until 1953 and that his election to the Presidency would have been a national disaster. But after granting all one's reservations and qualifications, after admitting all one's "liberal" predilections, one must finally say: here was a man who deserved the impassioned respect he received; here was a worthy opponent.

Robert Taft's story is so authentically American that it reads in many parts like a piece of our national folklore. The typical American virtues are there as are the typical American shortcomings, and they are present in bold relief. There was nothing negative about Robert Taft, nothing evasive, and, at least in his public life, nothing subtle. He was as honest, as direct, as industrious, as toughminded, and as practical as The American is legended to be. He hated any sign of pretense or sham, despised moral weakness and distrusted "idealists." He loved liberty and reverenced the Constitution as its foundation and private property as its guarantee. If, at the same time, his vision was narrow and his imagination weak, if he tended to dismiss complexity and embrace slogans, if he saw the modern world largely in the image of his native Ohio, it was because in these things too he was authentic of his tradition. He was perhaps the last great spokesman for America's Age of Innocence.

In Robert Taft's view, Mr. White observes, "the only indispensable thing was to protect 'American liberty,' which he believed to be quite divisible from liberty in general." The whole of his public life was devoted to protecting this "indispensable thing" from the threat of its twin enemies: "creeping socialism" and "internationalism." The former, he was convinced, would destroy American liberty by compromising its foundation, the Constitution, and undermining its guarantee, private property. The latter would destroy American liberty by involving the nation in foreign wars which would lead to the "nationalization of all industry and all capital and all labor."

Taft's natural enemy, therefore, was the Democratic party, the party of New-Fair Deal "socialism" and "internationalism." For this party he felt the dedicated hatred a man feels for what would destroy him. But he felt a grudging respect for the Democrats too, the respect a man feels for an enemy who is open and honest and strong. There was another enemy in Taft's book, however, for whom he felt only bitter contempt. This was the *unnatural* enemy which wore the label of the Republican party but seditiously urged some accommodation with the hated Democrats. On this enemy he conferred the label of "me-too" Republicans, a label which somewhat inadequately conveyed the depth of his scorn. In the campaign between Harry S. Truman and Thomas E. Dewey, Taft undoubtedly felt tortures of ambiguity, and probably only his unto-death commitment to the Republican party made him support the latter. For in his final view, as Mr. White points out, *any* Republican was preferable to *any* Democrat.

And so Taft fought a double battle during most of his public life, against the Democrats in power and at the same time against those Republicans who, in his view, treacherously aped the Democrats in order to gain power. In his war against the Democrats he earned the name of Mr. Republican, only to be defeated in four Republican conventions by the despised "me-too'ers" of his party. These defeats, by Willkie, by Dewey, by Dewey again, and then by Eisenhower, were for Taft much more than personal defeats. They were defeats for the *real* Republican party and therefore defeats for America which, he was convinced, could be saved only by that orthodox Republicanism for which he was the spokesman and symbol.

After the final defeat in 1952 it seems clear that the Senator thought briefly what, for him, was almost unthinkable: he considered withholding his active support from the Republican ticket. It was only after assuring himself, through Eisenhower's written promises at Morningside Heights, that the General would conduct a genuinely *Republican* campaign and, if elected, organize a recognizedly *Republican* administration, that he gave the national ticket his full support.

To the end of Taft's life, Mr. White observes, "the Morningside Heights document was a comfort to him; he could look back upon it as commemorating a place where he had pulled forth a certain kind of victory from defeat. To him the victory was unquestioned because *he* never had the slightest doubt that Eisenhower had indeed 'surrendered.' In his mind he had brought from Morningside a paper validating the claims *and policies* of the orthodox Republicans as surely as the Barons had wrested their charter



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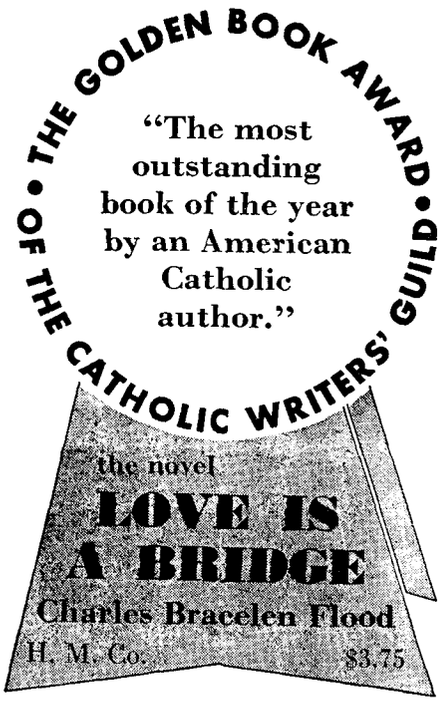
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from King John at Runnymede. To him the Manifesto of Morningside meant precisely what it said; and what it said was pretty plain. It said that but for foreign policy (and even here the divergence was to be one only of 'degree') the Eisenhower policies would be primarily the policies that Robert A. Taft had shaped and largely made."

The victory that Taft snatched from defeat in the Morningside agreement was more than a late victory over the "Dewey Republicans," however. It was, as it turned out, a victory over Taft's own worse self, his long-nurtured *opposition* self. He had never, apparently, even during the intensely bitter days of the 1952 convention, blamed Eisenhower personally for his defeat. He saw Eisenhower, rather, as a well-meaning, unknowing pawn used by Dewey, Brownell, and the other "me-too-ers " in their dark plot to seize control of the Grand Old Party from its rightful proprietors, the Midwest orthodox Republicans.

Now, assured that Eisenhower was, after all, prepared to act like a "real Republican," Taft forgot old rancors to fight with all his partisan passion and conviction for the success of the first Republican Administration in twenty years. Nothing, he felt, not his own past disappointments, not the bitterness of his followers, not even his present doubts about the Eisenhower Administration's fundamental "soundness," could be allowed to threaten the new President. And in all this Taft acted firmly because he was convinced that if the Administration failed, the country would be irrevocably lost to the Democrats.

This was, in Mr. White's description, the period of "the last, best Taft," the period when he put opposition and bitterness behind him and, as Eisenhower's "Prime Minister," worked for a renaissance of responsible Republican government. And when, too soon, he knew that he was about to die he bequeathed his leadership in the Senate to a "moderate" Republican, William Knowland, rather than to one of his own more orthodox followers. This was his last act for his party and in it, as in most of the things


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he had ever done, Robert Taft performed unselfishly.

It was the paradox of Taft's career that he was in one sense too good, and in another, perhaps more important, sense not good enough for his times. His virtues were the simple, sometimes called "homely," virtues. In another time, in a more innocent age, they would have been more than enough to qualify him for that national leadership he sought for so long. But they were not enough for the terrible time in which he lived. They offered, in themselves, no map of the present, no key to the future.

Mr. White puts it brilliantly: "The man's tragedy was that all his exertions and all his sacrifices had never brought him to the place of ultimate leadership that in so many ways he had so honestly earned. The time's tragedy was that this man who in most of his career had been too honest for his era had likewise been too remote from its terrible realities, too uncomprehending of too much to be accepted for that leadership."

And yet, when Robert Taft died, "every man who valued the brave, the kind, the awkward gallant—never mind, just now, all the great national questions of who was right about this and who was right about that—every such man knew that a special ending had now come."

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## Seer and Seen

PAUL VALERY AND THE CIVILIZED MIND. by Norman Suckling. Oxford. $4.

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

PAUL Valery was the metaphysician of Apollo. He criticized Pascal violently and placed himself in the tradition of Descartes. At one extreme, he could write (*Lettre sur Mallarme*), "I would infinitely rather write something weak in full consciousness and complete lucidity than give birth to a masterpiece of the most beautiful kind by means of trance outside of myself."

For in Valery, the myself, the *moi pur,* an absolute consciousness distinct from the world, from emotion, from all but the self, was the center of being. He wrote that "he who sees is incompatible with that which is seen."

Yet Paul Valery was also a poet. As such, there was a contradiction between his art and his metaphysics —for in poetry it is impossible to maintain an absolute distinction between seer and thing seen. This impossibility is articulated by Valery himself, and the same man who would rather write something weak in "complete lucidity" than make a masterpiece by means of trance could define poetry as the representation of "those things or that thing which tears, cries, caresses, kisses, sighs, etc., try obscurely to express" (in *Litterature*).

But even more than in his writing about poetry, this contradiction is visible in his poetry itself. At the end of *La Jeune Parque,* the goddess who had been tempted by absolute lucidity returns to the turbulent and imminent sea. In *Cimetier Marin,* there is an acceptance of the world of phenomenon, a conclusion that "we must attempt to live."

One of the major flaws of this book about Valery is that it does not take this contradiction into account. Valery is here treated formally, as a metaphysician, without any real reference to the sinuous and sensual cast of his thought. As such, he emerges as *merely* a hyper-intellectualist, a classicist, an anti-Bergsonist, and no more. An entire dimension of his significance, and perhaps the most important, is lacking.

The other major flaw is conscious. It is that Norman Suckling is here treating Valery as a text for his own commentary. One feels that the revelation in this book is not of Paul Valery but of Norman Suckling. Thus he announces at the outset that he will treat Valery as Valery himself treated Leonardo, as a mythic figure, as a focus for his own thought. And this thought, Suckling's own, runs the risk which Marcel Raymond foresaw for all of Valery's disciples: that lacking their master's profundity, they would not purify, but sterilize, the self. Thus Suckling can refer to Schubert as one of those "inferior artists who produce fine things only by accident. . . ." One thinks of "Death and the Maiden"; the rage against romanticism can go too far.

Yet Paul Valery is present in this book, and to the extent which he is, by generous quotation, it is of great interest. For however violently one might react toward Valery's metaphysics, taken out of the context of his art, one cannot cease to wonder at the complexity of his mind and the purity of his verse. Valery was *the* inheritor of Mallarme, and if the distance between *Herodias* and *La Jeune Parque* is great, it represents, I think, an advance.

It is unfortunate that Suckling did not undertake a commentary on the whole of Valery. If he had, this would have been an important book. As it is, I am afraid that its interest is confined to those who are already convinced admirers of the great French poet. As an introduction to his work, or as a survey, I think the total effect of *Paul Valery and the Civilized Mind* is to distort. But as a complement to a reading of Valery's own work and other criticism, this book has an undeniable fascination, one which is inevitable given the subject of the study.

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## Witty Gloom

PHILOSOPHER OR DOG? By Machado de Assis. Translated from the Portuguese by Clotilde Wilson. Noonday Press. $3.50.

By VIVIAN MERCIER

"I SHALL be read around 1880," said Stendhal, with the insight of a prophet. In that very year the Brazilian novelist Machado de Assis, who was always abreast of the latest trends in France, mentioned Stendhal's name on the very first page of his first ironic novel, *The Posthumous Memoirs of Braz Cubas* (recently published by Noonday Press under the title *Epitaph of a Small Winner*). Machado went on to say, with truth, that he was imitating Sterne or Xavier de Maistre, rather than Stendhal. With even greater truth he might have claimed



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to be imitating Voltaire, and especially *Candide*.

Not until 1891 or 1892, when the oddly-titled novel before us was originally published as *Quincas Borba,* did Machado de Assis really capture the wry tones of Stendhal. It may seem odd that a Brazilian writing in Portuguese should fit so closely into the metropolitan French tradition; however, the authorities on Latin-American literature all appear to agree that, whether it be in Spanish or Portuguese, this literature has almost always been dominated by French influence, if only to assert the new nations' independence of the mother-countries, Spain and Portugal. So up-to-the-minute was Machado that in poetry he imitated his exact contemporaries in France, the *Parnassiens*. We are told that he was a daily visitor at the Rio de Janeiro bookshop of Garnier, the famous Paris publishing firm, which served as a sort of club for Brazilian men of letters. When we hear also that he knew enough English to read Sterne and Shakespeare in the original, we begin to wonder whether this cosmopolitan deserves to be called a Brazilian writer at all. Yet he was born in Rio of a Brazilian mulatto father and a Portuguese mother; furthermore, he was such a *carioca* that he seems never to have spent a day outside the city of his birth. To recognize his debt to his French and English masters is not to deny him his share of originality, while Arturo Torres-Rioseco paradoxically calls him "the most essentially Brazilian writer of his nation."

To compare any writer to Stendhal is in itself high praise, if the comparison can be sustained with any semblance of justice. In Machado we find the dry, subtle analysis of motives so characteristic of Stendhal; even after translation we can find in Machado, too, an echo of the earlier writer's restrained, pitiless style; a third element which the Brazilian and the Frenchman have in common is their ironic appreciation of the splendors and miseries of political ambition.

For the rest, *Philosopher or Dog?* reads like very tired Stendhal indeed. The French ironist often records the most riotously romantic adventures in his court-reporter's shorthand, whereas the Brazilian presents us with characters who, far from possessing great power for both good and evil, lack energy to carry out even the peccadilloes they love to imagine for themselves. Rubiao, the ex-school-teacher who is left a fortune by Quincas Borba (the insane Pangloss-like philosopher of *Epitaph of a Small Winner*), squanders his money, fails to become a Congressman, fails to win the woman he loves, goes insane—all in the quietest, most unobtrusive manner possible. He is perhaps happiest when deluding himself that he is Napoleon III, but his insanity does not appear to be a natural consequence of his thwarting experiences; rather it pops up accidentally, as do all the twists of the plot, none of which ever builds up to a climax. *Philosopher or Dog?* is—dare I say it?—a rather dull book, as dull as life itself, for all its irony. Not the least dull aspect of the book is the fact that Quincas


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Borba the philosopher has left his dog, also named Quincas Borba, to Rubiao to take care of. Hence the misguided title of the English translation.

In theory, *Philosopher or Dog?* is no more cynical and pessimistic a book than *Epitaph of a Small Winner,* whose narrator sums up his frustrated life thus: "I did not achieve celebrity, I did not become a minister of state, I did not really become a caliph, I did not marry . . . ," but consoles himself with this thought: "I found that I had a small surplus. . . : I had no progeny, I transmitted to no one the legacy of our misery."

In practice, however, *Epitaph,* like *Candide,* is one of the most *exuberantly* pessimistic books ever written. The English translation crackles with Voltairean epigrams which appeal to my basically simple sense of humor: "Marcella loved me for fifteen months and eleven *montos* [about $5,500]." "Tight boots are one of the greatest goods in the world, for, by making feet hurt, they create an opportunity to enjoy the pleasure of taking off your boots." Braz Cubas describes himself in his student days as possessing "complete faith in dark eyes and written constitutions." When the woman whom he has adulterously loved for most of his mature years miscarries with the only child he is ever to father, he makes a cruel joke of it: "The embryo went away, at that stage at which a Laplace and a turtle look very much alike." Only the mad philosopher Quincas Borba maintains that everything is for the best, or, as he puts it, "Pangloss . . . was not so great a fool as Voltaire thought." "You are alive," says "Nature or Pandora" to Braz Cubas in his delirium; "I wish you no other calamity."

If you can laugh at such witty gloom or gloomy wit, *Epitaph* is obviously for you, but that is no guarantee that you will care at all for *Philosopher or Dog? Dom Casmurro,* one of Machado's last novels, has also been translated recently; I am looking forward to reading it, for the author of *Epitaph,* even at something less than his best, is worthy of our best attention.



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# Star Reborn

I'LL CRY TOMORROW. By Lillian Roth. Fell. $3.95.

By JOHN COGLEY

THE name on the jacket-cover, Lillian Roth, was not new to me. Like most Americans my age, I have warm and generally happy childhood memories of the local movie house and the hours I spent there with popcorn and the stars; and I remembered the pretty, dimpled, bugle-voiced star of early Hollywood musicals.

Through the years when I was growing up, nothing was heard of Lillian Roth. She faded from the Hollywood firmament — but then many other names also disappeared from the marquees. Yet there was certain music associated with her—notably Huguette's Song from "Vagabond King"—and so she was never totally forgotten. Every now and then I'd hear the familiar score and the words "Never try to bind me . . ." and wonder what ever happened to the girl who sang it so memorably.

During these same years Lillian Roth was going through a private drama more moving than the plots of any of her rather simple-minded Hollywood hits. She went from the heights of Hollywood fame to the depths of alcoholic shame — and then, praise God, she came back from hell. In *I'll Cry Tomorrow* Miss Roth tells her story and does it with such brutal candor and humility that even the most righteous puritan must get some glimpse of why there is great rejoicing in heaven when one who was lost is found again.

Lillian Roth was a child star with people like Milton Berle, Ruby Keeler and Gene Raymond, all of whom gained adult theatrical fame. She moved on from a kid act in vaudeville to featured billing in several flashy Broadway revues. The inevitable move to Hollywood brought her fame and money when she was still in her teens. The name Lillian Roth was on everyone's lips—and then she disappeared and was generally forgotten.

After severing an unsuccessful marriage with an ineffectual youth who was apparently as unstable and thoughtless as herself, she re-married and settled down to domesticity with a solidly respectable New York judge. But by the time she assumed the role of Manhattan matron, the former star had already become a confirmed alcoholic. The marriage with the judge was ill-fated from the beginning. After seven years of it, she moved on and slipped disastrously. Life became one long Lost Weekend.

In all there were three more marriages—one to a sadistic monster, one to a kindly enough, good-natured fellow who was overwhelmed by the problem of an alcoholic wife and simply took off one day, and finally to the loving man now her husband—and like herself a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The most amazing part of Lillian Roth's story is her wholly unlikely conversion to the Catholic faith, which came after she had stopped drinking and was fighting the battle of her life. A radio sermon about the Blessed Virgin aroused her interest in the Church, and she was later fortunate in finding two wonderfully sympathetic priests who nurtured the seed. Indeed, the Lillian Roth story might be subtitled "A Study in Divine Grace."

As she herself says, grace is the only explanation for the comeback she has made as a human being from the pit of despair and degradation into which she had fallen. Her book is a song of grace—and a tribute as well to the human patience, kindliness, forgiveness and sympathy of many of her friends. She ends it by quoting François Mauriac to the effect that we are constantly being remade by the people who love us.

This is a deeply moving confession, in the Augustinian sense. It is impossible to read it without taking heart for oneself, with one's own less spectacular and public but equally hateful sins. The Lillian Roth story should encourage sinners to become saints and saints to love sinners—and all to love God, Who has done mighty things for the girl who sang "Never try to bind me...."


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## The story of religion's struggle for survival under Communist domination

# RELIGION Behind the Iron Curtain

By George N. Shuster

From official documents, eyewitness reports of refugees, and his own great knowledge of Europe, George N. Shuster has written the story of the Communist efforts to erase religious opposition in Germany, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, Albania, the Baltics and the Balkans. Dr. Shuster, president of Hunter College and a former editor of *The Commonweal,* reveals the pattern of destruction throughout these countries—the tragic, inhuman suffering, the unfair trials, ridicule and death which Catholic, Protestant and Jewish people have endured. It is a frightening picture, but behind it lies hope, hope in courage and heroism of those who have faith.

"This study is at once factual and meditative. Long familiarity with these lands has enabled the author to intertwine his own judgments with the bare enunciation of facts. If he criticizes national weaknesses frankly, this is always with respect for the nations under discussion and always with a humility that refrains from presumptuously judging the conduct of those who have cracked under the inhuman burdens laid upon their backs. The long passages devoted to the case of Cardinal Mindszenty add up to a remarkable vindication of this heroic prelate. . . . What will be the outcome of the conditions that produce situations like this, so degrading to the human person? Dr. Shuster discounts war as a solution. An end will come eventually, he hopes, 'through some profound change of the spirit and a great uprising for freedom.' He has done his part in showing religion's role in this rally for freedom."

—*America*

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